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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 001938

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EO 12958 DECL: 01/01/2017  
TAGS PREL, FR, EUN, PGOV, ETRD, UK, GM, TU, PINR  
SUBJECT: UK READOUT OF BLAIR-SARKOZY MEETING  
Classified By: PolMC Josiah Rosenblatt for reasons 1.4 (B & D).  
1. (C) SUMMARY: UK PM Blair's May 11 meeting with French President-elect Sarkozy focused primarily on next steps on the EU constitutional treaty.  
2. (C) POL M/C and Deputy met May 14 with UK Embassy DCM Tim Hitchens for a readout of UK PM Tony Blair's May 11, late-afternoon meeting with  
MOVING THE EU FORWARD  
3. (C) Hitchens confirmed press reports that the discussions focused primarily on how to overcome the EU's current blockage on institutional reform.  
4. (C) POL M/C asked if Merkel would be speaking for the 18 countries that have ratified the current draft constitutional treaty. Hitchens responded with  
FOUR UK CONCERNS; SARKOZY CLOSE ON THREE  
5. (C) On substance, Hitchens described four UK "conditions" for reaching an agreement, on three of which he believed that the UK and France could agree.  
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reflection, Hitchens speculated that Sarkozy was using the idea as a negotiating ploy that would please his French domestic audience. Finally, he noted that  
TURKEY THE TOUGHEST NUT  
6. (C) On Turkey, Hitchens described Blair's position as wanting to ensure that Turkey's accession negotiations would continue uninterrupted, but that the UK was  
LITTLE ON TRADE  
7. (C) Hitchens said there was no in-depth discussion of trade. He said the UK supported the role of EC Commissioner Mandelson, whereas Sarkozy was  
NO ESDP  
8. (C) On European defense, Hitchens noted that, surprisingly, there had been no discussion.  
SARKOZY AND EUROPE  
9. (C) Asked about the impact of Sarkozy on Europe more generally, Hitchens expressed hope for a better UK-French working relationship, although he noted that  
ORIGINS OF MEETING  
10. (C) Hitchens said the idea of a meeting came up during one of Blair's and Sarkozy's phone conversations, with Blair offering to meet Sarkozy in London.  
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SARKOZY-BLAIR, -MERKEL, -BROWN  
11. (C) Hitchens said the chemistry between Blair and Sarkozy was good, much because they related to each other as politicians. Over the years, they had  
MEETING WITH CHIRAC  
12. (C) Hitchens described Blair's meeting with Chirac as uneventful. Chirac spoke as an old friend, noting that the UK and France sometimes disagree.  
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